

to thank Brian and Myra for taking me in; and I want to thank Amy for coming back to work for me. *[Laughter]*

Brian was up here talking, and I was thinking, you know, the only thing that has been sort of a required part of our friendship—besides his mentioning of the nuclear waste issue—is a regular golf outing. And I nearly never beat him. But I was thinking—after all, this is probably the fifth or sixth event we've done here in the last 6 years—I'm the most expensive golf partner he ever had. *[Laughter]* He would probably dearly like to reconsider this whole deal.

But we've been friends for 30 years now, and then some, and I'm very grateful to be here. Every time I come here and I spend the night here, I feel a renewed gratitude. I also know that all of you felt as I did tonight, all of you who are from Las Vegas were delighted that Elias and Jody came over here and that they threw the reception over at their house, and we had a wonderful time with their children and their friends, and our prayers are with them. And I was very glad that they came over and spent a few minutes with us tonight.

Since we've been talking at the table and because it's quarter to 11, which for us three from the east coast over here is a quarter to 2 in the morning on our body, I'll be quite brief. But I'd like to just ask you to think about a couple of things.

The first is that our country has done very well these last 6½ years—economically and socially—crime rate's down, the welfare rolls are down, homeownership is at an all-time high, minority unemployment the lowest ever recorded. A lot of things are going well. What I would like to say is that I first feel grateful that I've been able to be President, and I hope I have had something to do with that. And I believe we have.

But the reason I'm here tonight, since I'm not running for anything anymore, is that I know that the reason we were able to follow good policies and do good things is that we started out with a vision and ideas that have now been embraced by my party, by the Democratic Party. And they make a difference. And they're different. They're different from what we were doing before, and they're certainly different—as you can tell if

you just pick up the paper in the morning—from what the other party believes in Washington.

Whether the issue is how to take the first big step to get rid of the deficit, or whether we should have a Brady bill or an assault weapons ban, or whether we should target a tax cut so that we can honestly say we've now opened the doors of college to all, because we've got—we've got some friends from Georgia here; we've got a national version of Georgia's HOPE scholarship now—or whether the issue is, now, in the aftermath of the terrible tragedy at Littleton, whether we should have a law passed that closes the loophole that allows, now, people with criminal or mental health histories to buy guns at gun shows they couldn't buy in gun stores or we should also require a background check for people who buy explosives, since we now know that's a very serious problem—we have had two examples, one at Littleton and one in Oklahoma City, which makes, I think, a very compelling case that it's hard to justify a background check on handguns and not have a background check on explosives, and I could give you lots and lots of other examples—but the point I want to make is that ideas matter and vision matters.

And what we've been trying to do—Al Gore and our Cabinet and everybody associated with me for the last 6½ years—is to make real what we pledged to the American people in 1992, that we wanted a country where every responsible citizen would have opportunity and where we would be coming closer together, across all the lines that divide us, into a stronger community, and where we continue to be the world's leading force for peace and freedom and prosperity. And we have largely been able to do that. So ideas matter, and that's why parties matter. And that's why I'm grateful for your presence here.

The second point I would like to make is that it's very important for the Democrats to do two things. One, to keep working every day between now and 2000, and not to just get into the same-old, same-old in Washington I used to see, where the two parties fight all the time and nobody shows up for work. I sometimes think that everyone who

works in Washington should be required to spend a week, a month somewhere else, because no other enterprise could survive if people spent all their time fighting and never had to do anything.

So we need to produce results. We need to deal with the aging crisis, the educational challenges we face. I think we ought to pay the debt down dramatically. I think it will really add to our long-term economic health. There are lots of challenges out there. I'm going to work until the last hour, the last day I'm President to try to get things done.

And the third point I want to make is that it's very important that we have good candidates adequately funded to implement these ideas in the 2000 election. Which is why I'm glad you're here and why I'm here.

I said something over at the Ghanem's I'd like to close with. If tonight in the middle of the night I were to wake up and God were standing over my bed saying, "I'm sorry, you can't do all this stuff for the last 2 years; I'm just going to let you do one thing—what do you want to do?"

In the aftermath of Littleton and what I've seen in Kosovo, I would say, "Well, I think it's pretty ironic that in this glitzy, high-tech global economy age where we're about to uncover the mysteries of the human genome so we may all be able to map out our future and live to be 125, that the biggest problems we've got in the world today come from the hatred of the human heart and people's—rooted in our fear of people who are different from us, with religious or ethnic or racial or any other kind of differences."

And if you just think about America's most traumatic moments in the last several years—Oklahoma City, Timothy McVeigh, a government hater—whatever that is—think about poor Matthew Shepard in Wyoming, killed because he was gay, at the outset of his life; James Byrd in Texas, dragged and torn apart because he was black.

Even in Littleton there were suggestions that these young men felt disrespected by the athletes in their school and, therefore, they wanted to get even with them, but by the way, they needed to find somebody they could disrespect, so they disrespected the minority kids in their school, and they targeted them, too.

And I just want you to think about this. The oldest demon of humans living together begins with fear of people who are not in your clan—literally, when we came out of the caves—people who are different from you. And once you fear somebody, it's not very far until you hate them. Then it's not very far from that until you can dehumanize them. Then it's not very far from that until you can justify killing them. Not very far.

We've had a lot of experience in that, in America. We had people who thought God told them to throw the Indian tribes off their lands. We had people who seriously preached in this country from the pulpit that God ordained the slavery that enslaved African-Americans here. We've had experience with what we now see going on in the rest of the world today.

But what I want to say to you is it is not endemic, in the sense that it's inevitable. You know, when the Hutus and the Tutsis fought in Rwanda, and 700,000 people died in 100 days—almost all from machetes—I heard people say, "Well, you know, those are African tribal wars, and the countries are all wrongly drawn, and everything." That's not true. In Rwanda, the borders have been pretty well the same for 500 years. And most of the time people got along.

Now I hear in the Balkans, "You know, those people always fought. They just can't get along." That's not true, either. For most of the last 600 years, those people did get along. They did work together. They managed their ethnic and their religious diversity.

And I just want you to think about that. I want you to think about—you know, we think about, we want our kids to know about computers and speak foreign languages and zip around the world and uncover all these great biological mysteries, and what a wonderful world it's going to be. And that's the world I've been working for. It is threatened by the most primitive impulse in human society, fear of people who are different from us.

And if we want America to do good around the world, we have to be good at home, first. Second, if we want to lead the world for peace and freedom, we've got to stand up against ethnic cleansing and mass killing. That's what Kosovo is about. I know it's a